

## **Minutes of the Special and Regular Meeting of April 10, 2007**

One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, California

### **SPECIAL MEETINGS**

#### **CLOSED SESSION - 6:15 P.M.**

- A. Conference with Labor Negotiator, Jack Crist, pursuant to Government Code Section No. 54957.6: BPOA, AFSCME and MMCEA
- B. Conference with Real Property Negotiator, Jack Crist, pursuant to G.C. Section 54956.8: APN 045 380 010

Attended by Councilmembers Dickenson, Feierbach, Lieberman, City Manager Crist, City Attorney Zafferano, Human Resources Director Sam, Community Development Director de Melo, Police Chief Mattei, and Labor Negotiator Fran Buchanan. Councilmembers Warden and Mathewson were absent. City Clerk Cook was excused from attending.

**ADJOURNMENT** at this time, being 7:25 P.M.

**Terri Cook**

**City Clerk**

This meeting not tape recorded or videotaped.

### **REGULAR MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER 7:30 P.M.**

### **ROLL CALL**

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Dickenson, Warden, Lieberman, Feierbach

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Mathewson

Staff Present: City Manager Crist, City Attorney Zafferano, Community Development Director de Melo, Police Chief Mattei, Human Resources Director Sam, Public Works Director Davis, City Clerk Cook.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Led by City Clerk Cook.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

#### **Presentation by the Belmont 4-H Club on their Tree Planting Program**

**Kristen Mercer**, Belmont 4-H Leader, stated that the Belmont 4-H Club participated in the California Re-Leaf grant program.

**Robin Hogan**, 4-H Member, explained what 4-H is. She explained the qualifications for the Re-Leaf program grant from the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. She outlined the projects undertaken by the 4-H Club through this grant, and noted that one project failed. She stated that trees were planted at Central Elementary, Ralston Middle, at Hidden Canyon and at the Sports Complex. She outlined the lessons learned from this experience.

Mayor Feierbach thanked Ms. Hogan for her excellent presentation.

Ms. Mercer stated that it is her desire to see Belmont form an Arbor Society, now that it has Tree City designation. She noted that more grants could be made available through the Society.

**RECESS:** **7:45 P.M.** (to consider the Belmont Fire Protection District and  
Redevelopment Agency Meetings)

**RECONVENE: 8:40 P.M.**

### **REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION**

No reportable actions.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Feierbach announced that the week of April 16<sup>th</sup> is National Astronomy Week, and there will be a special event commemorating this on April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Library. She also announced that she will be giving the Mayor's State of the City at a luncheon event on April 18<sup>th</sup> to be sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

Councilmember Dickenson stated that the Belmont Lions Club, Cintas Corporation, and the City of Belmont will be co-hosting a "shredding day" on April 28<sup>th</sup>, which would be an opportunity to safely dispose of paper records such as bank statements and tax records to reduce the incidence of identity theft.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Approval of** Minutes of Special and Regular Meeting of February 27, 2007 and Special and Regular Meeting of March 13, 2007

**Acceptance of** Written Communications: 1) Received March 29, 2007, PG&E'S Notification of Filing of Application Requesting Approval of Gas Accord IV Settlement Agreement

**Approval of** Resolution 9875 Declaring April 23 - April 29, 2007 West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week

**Approval of** Resolution 9876 Supporting Expansion of and Safety Enhancements to Transit Service

**Approval of** Resolution 9877 Opposing SB 303 – Measure Requiring Forward-Zoning to Accommodate a 10-Year Housing Supply

**ACTION:** On a motion by Councilmember Dickenson, seconded by Councilmember Lieberman, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a show of hands (4-0, Mathewson absent).

Councilmember Dickenson noted that there has been information in the press recently regarding the resolution supporting enhanced train service (Resolution 9876), and that the topic is controversial. He noted that the Joint Powers board has done some outreach to local elected officials on this issue.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Annual Review of Council Priority Calendar - Continuation of Step One: Ranking the Projects**

Mayor Feierbach stated she is having difficulty ranking the projects. City Manager Crist responded that the rankings are important in the budget process, and the Council should take the time it needs with this.

Councilmember Warden stated he has not ranked anything yet because he wants to discuss the items.

Councilmember Lieberman stated that he watched the DVD from the previous Council meeting regarding this topic, and is familiar with that discussion.

Executive Assistant Stallings clarified the additional information provided on this topic since the previous meeting. She noted there are eight new projects to rank, and she explained the ranking process.

**Joan Peceimer**, Belmont resident, stated that there is a speed issue on Monserat Avenue, and she does not want to have to wait for a change in the criteria to address this problem. She does not understand the liability issue regarding speed humps.

**Shaun Brennan**, Belmont resident, concurred with Mrs. Peceimer. Painting lane lines and adding signage is not enough. No one has been hurt yet, but that could change. Other cities have installed speed humps.

Discussion ensued regarding the various departments' project lists.

In response to Mayor Feierbach, Community Development Director de Melo clarified that downtown zoning uses can be incorporated into the General Plan update process. Some amendments could be made to the graphics and streamlining process for the Downtown Specific Plan, but he noted it is not a big project, and recommended waiting for the completion of the General Plan Update.

In response to Councilmember Warden, City Attorney Zafferano stated that the City has experienced recent issues relative to signage, and amendments to that ordinance may be needed. The current sign ordinance is difficult to enforce as it contains ambiguities.

Mayor Feierbach stated that Historic Preservation is an important project. Councilmember Dickenson concurred it should be above the line.

Councilmember Dickenson stated that the neighborhood parks could be incorporated into an ad hoc committee or foundation to facilitate donations for improvements. Donations could be used up front, with the City to maintain later. It empowers the neighborhood to facilitate upgrading. Councilmember Warden stated that people are likely to donate, but the City needs to control City property.

Parks and Recreation Director Politzer stated that the Commission has discussed this issue. Staff could help with the procedures of setting up a Foundation, and the Commission could vet the details. He outlined the Commission's discussion of this topic, and noted that City-owned properties have been prioritized over other ownership, such as by the schools. Some projects already have money.

Discussion ensued.

Mayor Feierbach stated that McDougal neighbors want park space restored at McDougal Park.

Councilmember Warden stated there is no money for field improvements, and some fields are not owned by the City. It is not productive to rank the fields individually, because one is not more important than another. He intends to rank this project below the line, and will lobby for the development of SemeriaPark, as there is much interest in that property by the neighborhood.

Discussion ensued regarding Barrett Community Center.

Councilmember Dickenson recommended that Barrett be discussed with all the Commissions for feedback and input.

Mayor Feierbach stated she supports the current mixed use of the Center and expressed concern regarding the effect on the neighborhood of any intensified use of that property. She concurs it is not a very attractive site.

Councilmember Lieberman stated that changes to the site are in order, and to not do so is a missed opportunity. He supports looking at options and would like to do more than just fix up what is there.

Parks and Recreation Director Politzer stated that there are ongoing maintenance issues at Barrett, and the site could be a good opportunity for a Foundation. Current uses could be incorporated into any site improvements.

Councilmember Warden noted that the use of the property de-intensified after the school closed and the current uses went into effect. It would be important to see what the community wants for that property.

Discussion ensued regarding public works projects.

Public Works Director Davis noted that traffic volumes on Ralston Avenue have not changed in twenty years. A new origin/destination study may show some slight variations from the previous study, but not much, and the cost for performing the study would have to come from another project.

Councilmember Warden concurred that there would not likely be much to learn from a new study. He noted that Ralston is a major arterial that needs a free flow of traffic. He could support making it more attractive but cannot support restricting the traffic.

Regarding speed hump and traffic policies, Public Works Director Davis noted that the genesis of both of these proposals came from the Planning Commission. He suggested that the policies are current and appropriate. He would advocate for the use of speed humps in the appropriate location. He described issues where there have been problems with installation. He recommended waiting for the revised best practices before undertaking any changes to Belmont's policies.

Discussion ensued regarding specifics of various projects, including bike lanes and Alameda striping.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Councilmember Warden, seconded by Councilmember Dickenson, the cancellation of the August 28<sup>th</sup> and December 25<sup>th</sup> Council Meetings were unanimously approved by a show of hands.

This item was continued to later in the evening in order to complete the ranking calculations.

#### **Update on Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement Project and Vendor Presentation**

Police Sergeant Halleran described the red light photo system offered by Redflex. He outlined the process used for test purposes at Ralston and El Camino and Ralston and Old County Road. He reviewed data from previous years' citations. Violations are being missed since an officer cannot be present full time at the intersections, and having an automated system could free up officers' time to take care of other police matters. He noted this program is intended to be funded by citations.

**Wade Bettisworth**, Redflex Traffic Systems, reviewed the process for and details of the survey performed at the intersections set forth. He noted that the issuance of a citation is at the sole discretion of the police department.

Discussion ensued regarding equipment and the optimal number of citations necessary to justify installation.

Sergeant Halleran stated that turning right against a red light without stopping is a pedestrian hazard, and Ralston Avenue and Old County Road is the most critical intersection due to high pedestrian volumes.

Mayor Feierbach stated that all movements in all directions should be considered because of future downtown development.

**Mr. Bettisworth**, Redflex, responded that the system can be upgraded. He described problems with signal interconnects, and noted that this could give a false sense of security. The timing of the yellow light would need to be adjusted if installed.

Discussion ensued regarding administration of the citation process, potential revenues, and personnel costs.

In response to Councilmember Lieberman's question regarding how many citations are likely to be issued, Mr. Bettisworth stated that this number is based on a number of factors, including percentage of transient drivers. He noted that residents may change their driving behaviors, knowing the presence of cameras. The number of citations usually starts out high, and then levels off. He clarified that the Redflex contract would include a cost-neutral clause.

Councilmember Warden stated that although this program appears to be privacy invasive, he supports the idea of being able to deploy officers to take care of other matters. There are aesthetic issues regarding the equipment. He noted that the City is looking into this program for safety, not for revenue. The question is how many accidents will be prevented.

Sergeant Halleran noted that because of the requirement to post signs at the city limits stating that red light cameras are in use, it could change driver behaviors in other areas of the city.

Councilmember Lieberman stated he is cautiously in favor of pursuing a red light program.

Councilmember Dickenson stated he supports the program.

In response to Mayor Feierbach regarding placement costs for new technology, Mr. Bettisworth clarified that the current equipment is likely to last for several years.

Mayor Feierbach noted that she supports the program. The city is planning economic development along the El Camino Real, and this program will provide safety to more pedestrians.



Discussion ensued regarding the equipment in use in San Mateo.

Sergeant Halleran commented that any final decision regarding installation of this program will require a public hearing.

Council concurred to have staff continue discussions with the vendor, Redflex.

**MEETING EXTENSION:** At this time, being 10:30 p.m., on a motion by Councilmember Dickenson, seconded by Councilmember Lieberman, the meeting was unanimously extended by 30 minutes by a show of hands (4-0, Mathewson absent).

**Annual Review of Council Priority Calendar - Continuation of Step One: Ranking the Projects**(continued from earlier in the evening)

Executive Assistant Stallings presented the overall project rankings from the individual Council member ranking. She explained the flaw in the electronic system based on individual rankings of “below the line” and “drop”.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Councilmember Warden, seconded by Councilmember Lieberman, and unanimously approved by a show of hands (4-0 Mathewson absent) to place all non-City-owned field items below the line.

Executive Assistant Stallings noted that the Priority Calendar would be developed based on the final rankings, which will be presented at the next meeting for approval.

**MATTERS OF COUNCIL INTEREST/CLARIFICATION**

**Discussion and Direction regarding the creation of off-leash hours for dogs at Barrett Park (Dickenson)**

Councilmember Dickenson stated that he has been approached by neighbors at Barrett Community Center/Park to request that some off-leash hours be designated for dogs in the morning and in the evening. He noted a primary issue is dealing with dog waste. The neighbors are willing to be stewards. He would support fencing off a portion of the grassy area to accommodate this.

Councilmember Warden stated this is a safety issue in a public space. Belmont already has a dog park, and he does not support dogs being off leash except in the dog park. This issue is a question of whether the City wants another dog park, which is a different discussion than this one.

Councilmember Lieberman stated he would support a future agenda topic on this matter.

Mayor Feierbach stated that Belmont already has a dog park, and this proposal would impact the playing field use. There is a problem with dogs being off leash in and around Water Dog Lake.

There was concurrence to not pursue this matter further.

**ADJOURNMENT** at this time, being 10:45 P.M.

**Terri Cook**

**City Clerk**

Meeting Tape Recorded and Videotaped  
Audio Recording 663